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CONNECTIONS QUOTES FROM THE KENTUCKY DERBY DRAW

MARK CASSE (WAR OF WILL, POST 1, 20-1) – “You know what, it could be worse I think. Our horse is really on his game so he’ll come away from there running. We’ll probably be on the lead. I think we’ll probably be on the lead and play catch me if you can. And you know if we come away from there like he normally does, we’re going to come away from there running. At least we have the shortest way around. I’ve thought I had great draws before and gotten wiped out so maybe this is the change.”

DANNY GARGAN (TAX, POST 2, 20-1) – “I wanted to be on the inside. He’s been in the one hole three times with two wins and a second. He has tactical speed. Now we won’t have to use him much to lay fourth or fifth in the race. I like the horse inside us [War of Will] because he’s a speed horse. Hopefully he goes. I want to tuck in behind him and sit on the rail. If he doesn’t go, I’m going to come out running and sit on the rail.”

BRET CALHOUN (BY MY STANDARDS, POST 3, 20-1) – “Gabe (jockey Gabriel Saez) said he wanted somewhere between post five and 12. We drew three but it is close enough. I’m glad we didn’t draw the rail or post 20.”

PETER MILLER (GRAY MAGICIAN, POST 4, 50-1) – “It shouldn’t be a problem. We plan on taking back early.”

BOB BAFFERT (GAME WINNER, POST 16, 5-1; IMPROBABLE, POST 5, 6-1; ROADSTER, POST 17, 6-1) – “They’ll all be easy to watch. With Roadster I wanted the 16 so I got 16 and 17 (with Game Winner) and Improbable is a quicker horse. Anything but the one or two I’m fine with that. I think the good horses all drew well.”

(On post 17 being 0-for-40) “They also had that curse last year. Not that many horses run out of there but I’m OK. We’ll figure out a plan for them. I think Improbable he’s the quickest of the three and he’s in the five. There are speed horses outside of him, too. They still have to break. I like 16. The 17 has been 0-for-40, but it’s like American Pharoah had the 18 and there was a scratch and he had the 17 for a day then he went to the 16. At the end of the day, you have to have the horse. If your horse shows up, that’s more important. After watching Big Brown gallop from the 20 hole it really doesn’t make a difference.”

“I think it’s less stressful (not having the favorite). I think the expectations when you have the favorite is put on you but I think when I had the favorite with Pharoah or Justify, it was their race to lose. There are a lot of nice horses in this race. Omaha Beach, he deserves to be the favorite. We’ll just see how it plays out.”

GEORGE WEAVER (VEKOMA, POST 6, 20-1) – “This is a perfect spot. We wanted somewhere between post five and 10 and we got a great spot. I’m happy to be back in Louisville.”

JASON SERVIS (MAXIMUM SECURITY, POST 7, 10-1) – Trainer was driving to Louisville and unavailable for comment.

BILL MOTT (COUNTRY HOUSE, POST 20, 30-1; TACITUS, POST 8, 10-1) – “I was hoping for the middle and that’s what we got. I’ve no complaints (for Tacitus). “Twenty should be fine for (Country House). He’s going to come from far back.

BRENDAN WALSH (PLUS QUE PARFAIT, POST 9, 30-1) – “I wanted something between two and 12, which I said earlier this week, and that’s what we got. Hopefully he breaks and then can save some ground. It looks like the speed is inside of us, so that’s good. I’m happy with the post.”

TODD PLETCHER (CUTTING HUMOR, POST 10, 30-1; SPINOFF, POST 19, 30-1) – “I’m satisfied with both. I don’t mind being outside with Spinoff since he hasn’t experienced a lot of kickback. And with Cutting Humor from the 10, Corey (jockey Corey Lanerie) should have plenty of options. Neither should have to spend a lot of time in the gate, too.”

KIARAN MCLAUGHLIN (HAIKAL, POST 11, 30-1) – “He loads first, which is the only negative, but otherwise it’s a great post.”

RICHARD MANDELLA (OMAHA BEACH, POST 12, 4-1) – Jockey Mike Smith and Mandella (Sitting together) – Smith: “Perfect. I love it. Didn’t want to be down inside. I think I’m in a great spot.” Mandella: “He’s happy (nodding toward Smith), so you know I’m happy. It’s good.”

SHUG MCGAUGHEY (CODE OF HONOR, POST 13, 15-1) – “It's perfect for me. I was hoping for something toward the outside. I think they load from the inside out. I just didn't want to be buried down on the inside. It's perfect.”

MIKE TROMBETTA (WIN WIN WIN, POST 14, 15-1) – “It was a lot less pressure this year than 2006 when we were the favorite. We had so many cameras and media around us that it’s a little bit, but not much, more relaxing this year. I’m happy with our post. We’re ready to go.”

KOICHI TSUNODA (MASTER FENCER, POST 15, 50-1) – “We are lucky not to have the 20. Horses have won from the outside gate. We are happy to be in the race. The (post position) is good.”

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WILLIS HORTON (OWNER, LONG RANGE TODDY, POST 18, 30-1) – “It wasn't what I wanted, but it will be all right. He has enough tactical speed out of the gate. As long as he breaks good, he'll have a quarter mile until the first turn to get himself into position. We'll probably be sitting right right behind the speed.”

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